

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to present the Reuse Plan for Camp Bonneville as well as document the public process, data, analysis and alternatives that were generated during this reuse planning effort. The closure of Camp Bonneville presents a unique opportunity to transform surplus military property and facilities for economic development, job creation, and public uses which will provide significant benefits to the Clark County community.

Camp Bonneville, located in the southeastern section of Clark County, Washington, is a U.S. government property selected for transfer and reuse by the Base Realignment and Closure Commission in 1995. Camp Bonneville is a sub-installation of Vancouver Barracks, which is a sub-installation of Fort Lewis, Washington. Camp Bonneville encompasses approximately 3,020 acres, which have been identified as BRAC property subject to lease or transfer, and an additional 820 acres leased from the State of Washington not included in this reuse plan.

Camp Bonneville was established in 1909 as a drill field and rifle range for Vancouver Barracks. In 1912, an appropriation was made to expand facilities at Camp Bonneville to include a target range and a road leading to the post. The 3,020 acres upon which Camp Bonneville was established, were purchased by the federal government in 1919. In addition, the U.S. Army leased 840 acres of adjacent property, in two separate parcels, from the State of Washington in 1955. Of these 840 acres, 20 acres were returned to the State of Washington in 1957. The Bonneville and Killpack cantonments were established in the late 1920's and the early 1930's. These cantonments include a total of 54 buildings and 18 additional structures, such as observation towers.

Historically, Camp Bonneville has been used as a training camp for active U.S. Army, U.S. Army Reserve, U.S. National Guard, U.S. Marine Corps Reserve, U.S. Navy Reserve, and U.S. Coast Guard Reserve units, as well as other Department of Defense (DOD) reserve personnel. In addition, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) was issued a five-year permit that will expire in October 14, 2001, for use of a handgun range the FBI constructed at the site. (This permit is subject to termination once final disposition of the site is determined).

To assist in the community-based planning effort, the Clark County Board of County Commissioners appointed a five-member Reuse Planning Committee (RPC) to oversee the reuse planning process. The RPC established six subcommittees made up of community representatives to assist in preparing planning options. Representatives from each of the subcommittees were selected by their subcommittees to participate on the Steering Committee whose job was to balance interests and findings of the six subcommittees and make recommendations to the Reuse Planning Committee.

Federal agencies were notified of the availability of property due to pending camp closure. Applications were received by the Army Corps of Engineers from the Bureau of Prisons, the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the FBI, whose application was filed after the deadline. The Bureau of Prisons and US Fish and Wildlife Service withdrew their applications, and the FBI

and LRA are working cooperatively in this planning effort to ensure that FBI activities are compatible with the reuse plan.

The LRA mailed two notifications to all agencies serving the homeless of Clark County. Native American tribes in Southwest Washington and Northwest Oregon were also sent notifications. There was a demonstrated lack of interest in utilizing Camp Bonneville for homeless services because of its remote location, lack of nearby services, poor quality of the existing barracks buildings, high remodeling costs and high costs of replacing ailing or non-existent infrastructure.

Existing infrastructure systems were analyzed to determine the condition of roads, water systems, sanitary sewer systems, buildings and electrical systems. In general terms, roads on site are in good condition. The planned uses on site will require upgrading certain roads and the addition of others. Water systems were found to have outlived their useful lives and need replacement. Visual inspection has led to the conclusion that the existing sanitary sewage system is in severe disrepair and will require significant rehabilitation to meet environmental permit requirements. Further documentation and studies from the Army may alter this opinion. Buildings at Camp Bonneville cantonment are in fair condition, while those at Camp Killpack cantonment are in better condition having been upgraded in 1992 by the Corps of Engineers. Electrical systems can be upgraded to future uses without major cost.

The LRA Reuse Planning Committee established 7 guiding principals for planning which, in summary, required the reuse plan to be:

- Self sustaining
- Locally focused and directed
- An open process
- Considerate of impacts to the surrounding neighborhoods
- Addressed to overall community need
- Based on cooperation and consensus building
- Environmentally conservative

In addition to information provided by LRA subcommittee members, the consultant reviewed reports prepared by the U.S. Army, other federal agencies, and Clark County. Interviews were conducted with local government officials, key community representatives, Army base closure office staff, and the relevant state, regional, and local agency personnel. Market and financial feasibility analyses were conducted, as well as an evaluation of the noise impact of firing ranges on the other reuses and the surrounding neighborhood. A timber management study was also commissioned. Regional law enforcement agencies contributed funding to expand the original scope of work to include an analysis of the feasibility of developing a regional law enforcement training center at Camp Bonneville.

Reuse advocates from the local community prepared detailed business plans including information on the reuse, space and facilities required for each proposed use. These plans were reviewed by other reuse advocates and the advisory committees to identify areas of incompatibility, neighborhood impact, financial cost and benefit, and overall community need. Subcommittees identified areas that needed more technical evaluation. These technical studies

were funded through the Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA) reuse planning grant. Throughout these studies, information obtained was shared with the Steering Committee, with information requests regularly made of subcommittee members in a cooperative process with consultant and staff.

The Reuse Plan includes the following elements:

- Regional Park
- Law Enforcement Training Center
- Rustic Retreat Center/Outdoor School
- Native American Cultural Center
- Clark College Environmental Education
- Trails and Nature Area
- FBI Firing Range
- Law Enforcement & Public Firing Ranges
- Timber Resource Management Area

The Reuse Plan for Camp Bonneville includes a balance of public recreational, educational and law enforcement activities for economic development purposes. The key revenue generating element of the Reuse Plan is a program of moderate sustainable Timber Management. The revenue from Timber Management would fund up-front site infrastructure costs for roads and utilities, and could offset site carrying costs and future regional park operations. When fully built out, the on-site uses generate a break even level of income to offset development and operational costs.

There are a number of factors, which could impact this Reuse Plan and create the need to modify this plan in the future:

- UXO reports
- Endangered and threatened species studies
- New salmon and trout regulations
- Wetlands and riparian areas delineation
- Transfer restrictions
- Zoning
- Historical evaluation
- Timber harvesting restrictions
- Water and Sewage systems studies
- Lead contamination
- Liability issues
- Safety issues
- Any additional areas of environmental contamination or concern not yet identified

The Board of Clark County Commissioners should become the implementing local redevelopment authority and should take permanent title to uncontaminated and “cleaned” base property determined to be safe and secured for public use*. A public advisory body, meeting quarterly, should be created among the several Camp Bonneville users and neighbors as well as

the adjoining educational entities, to guide the long-term use of the land as a subcommittee of the Vancouver-Clark Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee.

** As of November 2005, the Department of Army and the LRA have both expressed interest in the pursuit of an “Early transfer”. If early transfer does occur, the property is transferred prior to full clean up of the contamination. The clean-up requirement will be identified and an appropriate level of funding transferred to the LRA as part of the transfer. The LRA would coordinate the clean up efforts.*

NOVEMBER 2005 UPDATE Summary

Since the time of the February 2003 update to this plan, Congressional legislation (10 U.S.C 2694a) has been approved, this is more closely related to the reuse plan. That legislation now permits Conveyance of BRAC properties for Conservation of Natural Resources. As this reuse plan is predominately open space and wildlife preservation (2/3 of the site), it ideally meets the intent of that legislation. The remaining 1/3, the Regional Park area, is recreational and will also serve to preserve the natural resources of the area.

Note: The re-use plan has not been altered. The original plan (1998) and the defined uses remain intact. The 2003 update provided better delineation of the reuse areas. That 2003 plan discussed the desire for an Economic Development Conveyance. This 2005 update has replaced the desire of an EDC with a desire for a Conservation Conveyance.

FEBRUARY 2003 UPDATE SUMMARY

This reuse plan has been updated to reflect adjustments to cost estimates due to inflation, to a minor extent to reflect a change in the desired conveyance vehicle (Economic Development Conveyance vs. Public Benefit Conveyance), and because more detail has been added to the reuse activities. It should be noted that No Change to the reuse activities has occurred, only more definition.

It has been at least five years since the estimates of costs were prepared. To more fully understand the cost involved with the reuse activities in present time and with the higher level of specificity, revised cost estimates were prepared for some of the development costs. These costs are reflected in Appendix F.

Due to the limited extent of this update, the majority of the text, facts and figures appear unaltered from the 1998 Draft Re-use plan. Accordingly, some references to actions and dates will be past tense. It was not the intent of this update to rewrite the document with respect to time.

